GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:941
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2015
Foreign TV Channels
Simha Shri Prathap

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private satellite TV channels which are uplinked from outside India and have been granted permission to downlink in India under the policy guidelines for Downlinking of Television Channels;

(b) whether the security agencies have identified certain private satellite TV channels, the contents of which is not conducive to the security environment of the country and has posed a potential security hazard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the concrete steps taken by the Government to address the problem of showings of illegal/unregistered channels on the cable networks and also to discourage cable operators for transmitting such private satellite TV channels?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING {COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)}

(a): As on date Ministry has permitted 87 TV channels which are uplinked from outside India and have been granted permission to downlink in India under the policy guidelines for Downlinking of Television Channels. The list of permitted channels is available on Ministry's website i.e. www.mib.nic.in.

(b) & (c): IB (MHA) has forwarded a list of unauthorized foreign TV Channels which are being down-linked and transmitted by Cable operators in different places. The list of these channels is at Annexure. IB had also informed that the contents of some of these channels may not be conducive to the security environment and they suggested that appropriate measures may be initiated to curb the re-transmission of all non-approved TV channels being shown by Cable TV operators across the country.

(d): The Ministry of I & B has taken various measures within the ambit of the extant law to stop the carriage of these illegal channels. Besides repeatedly taking up the matter with the State Governments, advisories have been issued to associations of Multi System Operators as well as Cable Operators asking them to transmit only those channels that are registered with Ministry of I&B. The provision preventing cable operators to carry unregistered channels is part of the Programme Code prescribed in Rule 6 of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994. According to the said Rule, no cable operator shall carry in his cable service any channel, which has not been registered with the Ministry of I&B. The requirement to comply with the Programme Code is contained in Section 5 of the Cable Television Network Regulation Act, 1995 which provides that no person shall transmit or re-transmit through a cable service any programme unless such programme is in conformity with the prescribed Programme Code. If any Cable operator violates Section 5 i.e. Programme Code, the Authorized Officers have the power to seize the equipment of the cable operator for a period of 10 days beyond which they are required to seek approval of the concerned District Judge to continue with the seizure. With a view to facilitate the Authorized Officers in enforcing the Act, particularly in curbing illegal channels, the Ministry of I&B has formulated a detailed guideline for setting up of State and District level Monitoring Committees to monitor the content transmitted by the cable operators. These Committees, comprising various cross sections of the society, are intended to aid and advise the Authorized Officers to ensure compliance of the provisions of the Act and the Rules thereunder. This Ministry has proposed certain amendments in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 to address the problem of illegal Telecast of foreign channels. The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Second Amendment Bill, 2011 containing these amendments was introduced in the Lok Sabha on the 15th of December, 2011 and was referred to the Standing Committee on IT for examination. The Committee opined that the proposed amendment to the Act would be redundant in view of the proposed complete Digitalization of the Cable Network. The Bill was introduced in the 15th Lok Sabha, therefore, with the dissolution of 15th Lok Sabha, the Bill stood lapsed.
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